



City Council Agenda Item Staff Report

CITY OF SAN BRUNO

DATE: July 26, 2016

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Jim Burch, Public Services Deputy Director

SUBJECT: Adopt Resolution Discontinuing Stage II Conservation Measures of the City's Water Shortage Contingency Plan and Implementing Stage I Conservation Measures

BACKGROUND:

The City Council has implemented a series of water conservation measures during the recent drought to comply with State reduction guidelines. At the July 22, 2014 Council meeting, the City Council activated Stage I of the Water Shortage Contingency Plan, which calls for voluntary conservation measures with a target of a 10 percent reduction in water use. This was in response to the July 15, 2014 emergency regulations from the State Water Resources Control Board for urban suppliers to implement low-level outdoor water restrictions.

On April 14, 2015, the City Council implemented Stage II of the City's Water Shortage Contingency Plan which requires a 20 percent mandatory water supply reduction with outdoor irrigation limited to two-days per week. This was in response to the April 1, 2015 call by the Governor to reduce statewide urban water consumption by 25 percent compared to 2013. Water agencies were placed into tiers based on historical water use to reduce consumption between 8 and 35 percent. As one of the top 10 cities for conservation in California, the State set San Bruno's reduction target at only 8 percent.

Total City water consumption has consistently met or exceeded the State's 8 percent reduction targets. For 2015, water consumption from all users (residential, commercial, and City parks and facilities) was down 14 percent from 2013 levels. For 2016 (January to June), overall water use is down 22 percent with residential use down 19 percent from 2013. Residential customers account for 75 percent of the City's total water consumption.

DISCUSSION:

A combination of a wet winter and a successful conservation campaign that reduced urban water use by almost 24 percent led Governor Brown to modify previous conservation guidelines in his May 9, 2016 Executive Order. Watershed levels in the Bay Area have improved sufficiently for some suppliers, including San Bruno, to temporarily reduce well production in order to replenish groundwater basins and rely on more water from Hetch Hetchy and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC).

In response to the Governor's Executive Order, the Water Resources Control Board lifted the mandate to reduce statewide urban water consumption by 25 percent. As watershed conditions have improved somewhat, the Water Board is allowing water agencies to establish their own preparedness strategies. A recent media release from the Water Board states that local water agencies are required to "ensure a three-year supply assuming three more dry years like the ones the state experienced from 2012 to 2015. Water agencies would face shortages under three additional dry years will be required to meet a conservation standard equal to the amount of the shortage. For example, if a water agency projects it would have a 10 percent supply shortfall, their mandatory conservation standard would be 10 percent." (Attachment 2) The State also left in place minimum reduction targets for individual agencies. For San Bruno, the reduction target remains at 8 percent of 2013 levels. Based on historical water use and conservation, City operations staff believe the 8 percent reduction target is sufficient to provide San Bruno residents adequate water supply over the next three years.

While the Governor's Executive Order transitions water agencies to implement more voluntary water conservation measures, San Bruno water operations staff encourage residents and all water users to continue their conservation efforts and to use water wisely.

San Bruno's Water Shortage Contingency Plan details four increasing levels of conservation measures the City can implement during water shortage events. The Water Shortage Contingency Plan is a part of the updated Urban Water Management Plan recently adopted by the City Council at the June 28, 2016 Council meeting. The Plan's conservation actions include a voluntary 10 percent reduction during Stage I up to the 50 percent intense reduction rationing during Stage IV. (Attachment 3)

Based on San Bruno's successful conservation efforts and adequate water supply, staff is recommending that the City Council discontinue the 20-percent mandatory conservation measures from Stage II of City's Water Shortage Contingency Plan and move to the voluntary 10 percent conservation measures of Stage I. These measures will include preparing utility bill inserts promoting conservation and awareness, providing informational handouts at City facilities, adding notices on the City's website and on City Cable Channel 1, and sponsoring educational speakers at local schools and other groups. Staff will also continue coordinating rebates for residents that install water efficient low-flow toilets and washing machines, or install less water intensive landscaping through the lawn-be-gone program.

As Stage I is a voluntary action, there are no administrative fines or civil infraction penalties anticipated at this time. City staff will continue to monitor and reach out to excessive water users to encourage water conservation.

The City will continue providing proactive leadership and outreach in order to set a good example of water conservation. Since 2014, the Community Services Department has installed lavatory faucet aerators and low flow shower heads in all City facilities and is testing dual low flow toilet flushers. Public Services will continue to evaluate and incorporate conservation methods into daily operations, including using recycled water from the South San Francisco-San Bruno Wastewater Treatment plant for sweeper and vactor trucks when appropriate.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The 2016-17 Water Operating Budget includes sufficient funding to implement all Stage I water conservation measures. Staff will monitor program implementation and expenditures, but no additional resources are anticipated.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Provide direction to staff for additional or alternative water use reduction strategies and requirements to comply with recent amendments to State drought emergency conservation targets.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt resolution discontinuing Stage II conservation measures of the City's Water Shortage Contingency Plan and implementing Stage I conservation measures.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution
2. Media Release: Water Resources Control Board Drought Regulations Summary, May 18, 2016
3. San Bruno Urban Water Management Plan: Water Shortage Contingency Plan - Stages of Action

REVIEWED BY:

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